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October 15, 2004

ORIGINAL

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

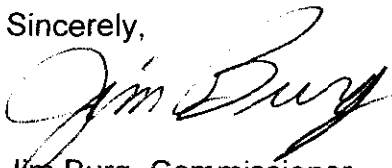
Re: Written Ex Parte Filing in CC Docket No. 99-273

Dear Ms. Dortch:

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC), at its annual meeting held in Washington last March, adopted a resolution urging the FCC to take prompt action to promote Directory Assistance competition. This \$6 billion sector of the communications industry has seen rising prices and little improvement in service quality. The retail DA market is generally immune from competition as the incumbent provider holds the number "411." As seen in many other contexts, dialing parity is a necessary prerequisite for genuine competition, and that also applies to the directory assistance market.

The Telecommunications Act of 1996 calls for competition in all telecommunications markets. Yet the directory assistance market, which would appear to clearly benefit from and appear to be a candidate for a relatively easy transition to competition, is not competitive. It's time to act upon NARUC's call for prompt FCC action. It's time to allow for competition in the retail directory assistance market.

Sincerely,



Jim Burg, Commissioner
South Dakota Public Utilities Commission

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